المجلس الإسلامي
Islamic Council

PRESS RELEASE

22 October 1992

In a statement issued today the Islamic Council expressed its deep regret at the recent attack on British tourists in Egypt and at the death of one young woman.

The Council said that the British press had been very quick to lay the blame on the Jama'a al Islamiya and that this information had originated with the Egyptian government. The Council is itself assured that the Jama'a al Islamiya is innocent of this, and previous, attacks on tourists. Indeed they welcome tourists to Egypt and state that they should be treated as honoured guests throughout the country. An interview given this week by the head of the orthodox church in Tamah, in southern Egypt, confirms this position and goes on to state that the Islamic groups' relations with the church are excellent and that they are not engaged in any sort of violence. It would indeed be far from their fundamental beliefs, or in their interests. The head of the local police also denied that the Jama'a al Islamiya was responsible for these incidents.

The Islamic Council stated that it was not surprised that the Egyptian government used every opportunity to blame the Islamic groups, aiming to discredit their image. For many years it has been harassing their members, arresting them and holding them without trial, denying them their basic human rights, and, in many well-documented cases, torturing them. Firm evidence of the Egyptian government's guilt is published in reports by Amnesty International, for example in 'Ten Years of Torture' (published 23 October 1991).

The Islamic Council said it hoped that the media would investigate more carefully instead of accepting without question propoganda issued by the Egyptian government.